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Revisiting the collection of Tatar musicaethnographic materials by the teachers of the Kazan Ecclesiastical Academy in the context of their missionary-educative activity (19th century)

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Abstract

Musical and ethnographic observations of the Tatars by the research faculty of the Kazan Ecclesiastical Academy are discussed in this article. Their scholarly works allow us to consider the specifics of national traditions and culture of the 19th century Tatars, reveal features of Tatar holidays and folk music performance, and understand the distinctiveness of their songs and instrumental music. Questions concerning collection of Tatar musical and ethnographic material by Kazan Ecclesiastical Academy faculty members are discussed in connection with their mission and educational work. The nature of these first forays into Tatar musical ethnography as an independent academic direction is related to the specific context of the mid-19th century. In this era, the collection and study of Tatar musical and ethnographic material had a goal-oriented character, due to the active efforts of many academic and educational institutions including the Kazan Ecclesiastical Academy. This institution was a science and educational centre for the study of the history, culture, ethnography and languages of the non-Russian nations of pre-revolutionary Russia. In 1854, special missionary departments were created whose activities focused on the conversion of Tatars and other nations of the Volga region, the Transurals and Siberia, to the system of Christianity. To fulfil this mission, specialists with sufficient knowledge not only in language but also the history, culture, ethnography of the non-Russian nations were required. Therefore teachers and scholars of Kazan Ecclesiastical Academy went on the ethnographic expeditions to various localities, where they collected information on national holidays, customs, rituals and the musical culture of non-Russian nations. Teachers of the Kazan Ecclesiastical Academy regularly published historical and religious works, tutorials with a spiritual and religious content, ethnographic, reference and bibliographic materials. As a research and educational centre, the Academy contributed greatly to Tatar musical ethnography. The gathering of Tatar musical ethnographic material by the academics and teachers of Kazan Ecclesiastical Academy was closely related to their missionary outreach.

Keywords

Ethnographic research, History and ethnography, Missionary-educative activity, Tatar musical ethnography, The Kazan Ecclesiastical Academy, The society for archaeology